

Data Digest

A summary from DATA YOU CAN USE

Selected Highlights from [LATINO MILWAUKEE: A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT*](#) (2016)

* The Greater Milwaukee Foundation commissioned a report on Latino Milwaukee which was produced by Marc V. Levine, at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Economic Development. The report provides numerous tables that compare the metro **Milwaukee's region** (Milwaukee and the WOW Counties of Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington) with **the nation's** 50 largest metro areas by ranking the region on several variables related to the Latino population. The information is based primarily on the most recently available census data from the American Community Survey.

This summary was originally prepared for the Siebert Lutheran Foundation by DATA YOU CAN USE to highlight some of the key findings for use in their strategic planning. It has since been used by several schools and neighborhood organizations for their planning purposes. It is shared here with the permission of the Siebert Foundation and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. It should be noted that Latinos, and particularly younger Latinos, are the most undercounted population in the US Census.

Profile of Latino Milwaukee

- The Latino population in metro Milwaukee has more than tripled since 1990, and now totals over 160,000
- This number is slightly **more than 10 percent of the region's total population (up from 3.6 percent in 1990)**.
- **Among the nation's 50 largest metros**, Milwaukee ranked 27th in the Latino percentage of the overall population.
- Consistent with the national trends, the rate of Hispanic population growth in metro Milwaukee in recent years far exceeds the rate of non-Hispanic White population growth.
- The combination of stagnant non-Hispanic demographic growth and steady Latino population gains has resulted in a pronounced and accelerating **"Latinoisation" of the metropolitan area's ethnic composition**.
- **Nearly three fourths of Milwaukee's Latino population are native-born citizens** and an additional 7 percent are foreign-born, naturalized citizens.
- Approximately one-fifth of the Latino population are foreign-born, non-citizens.
- Regardless of immigration status, the vast majority of Milwaukee Latinos, are of Mexican (67%) or Puerto Rican (23%) origin.
- **Among Milwaukee's foreign-born Latino population**, the overwhelming majority (87%) was born in Mexico.

Latino Population is much younger than White Non-Hispanic

- **While Latinos make up less than 3% of the region's population** over age 65, they account for 15% of the population under age 18. That gap --12 percentage points-- ranked 21st highest among the largest metro areas.

Segregation, Housing and Language

- To a much greater degree than in virtually all other large metropolitan areas, **Milwaukee's Latino community lives in the central city of the region. Two-thirds of the metro area's Latinos live in the city of Milwaukee.**
- Those living in the suburbs, primarily Waukesha, tend to have been in the U.S. longer, with the more recent immigrants clustered in the city of Milwaukee.
- **Milwaukee is one of America's most segregated cities based on the persistently high levels of black-white residential segregation in the region. Although the rate of Latino-White segregation is not as pervasive, it remains quite high and has not declined over the past twenty years.**
- Slightly more than one-fifth of Milwaukee Latino households are characterized as **"limited English speaking"** ranking 28th among the nation's largest metropolitan areas.
- Approximately one-third of metro Milwaukee Latinos spoke **"only English" in their homes.** Among Milwaukee Latinos who speak Spanish at home, almost three-quarters speak **English "very well" or "well."** This level of bilingualism places Milwaukee 21st among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas.
- By contrast, only 6 percent of Milwaukee Latinos who speak Spanish at home spoke English **"not at all."**

Home Ownership

- Not surprisingly given low incomes and poverty, home ownership among Latinos in Milwaukee is low. Milwaukee ranked 38th among the top 50 metro areas in home ownership in 2014.
- Milwaukee ranks toward the middle (29th) in the percentage of Latino homeowners with monthly owner costs exceeding 30 percent of household income – a Census Bureau measure of high housing cost burden.
- The housing burden is more onerous for Latino renters in Milwaukee: 45 percent of **metro Milwaukee's Latino renters paid gross rent that exceeds 30 percent of their household income, a level that ranked 18th highest among the nation's largest metropolitan areas.**

Family Structure

- **Milwaukee's Latino community has a lower percentage of "married couple family households" than the White Non-Hispanic population and a substantially higher percentage than the black community.**
- **The Latino rate in 2014 of "female headed, no husband present, with children" households in Milwaukee (16 percent) is four times higher than the white non-Hispanic rate, but lower than the black rate (26 percent).**
- **Among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas, Milwaukee ranks 43rd in the percentage of Latino households that are married couple families.**
- On the other hand, Milwaukee ranks 8th in the percentage of Latino households that are female headed, no husband, with children.

Need for Safety Net

- The following compares the percentage of households in metropolitan Milwaukee receiving food stamp/SNAP benefits by race:

Percentage of Households in Metropolitan Milwaukee, By Race, With Food Stamps/SNAP Benefits: 2007-2014

Race	2007	2014
Black	25.7	45.2
White Not Hispanic	2.9	7.9
Hispanic	15.1	33.2

- Many of the socioeconomic realities for Latino Milwaukee are similar to the trends evident for other populations of color.
- The disparity between Latino and White poverty in Milwaukee is among the widest in the country, although the gap has narrowed since 1999 as WNH poverty has increased at a faster rate than Latino poverty.
- **Over the past 25 years, Milwaukee's Latino** poverty has run several percentage points above the national average. In 2014, the national Latino poverty rate was 24 percent; in Milwaukee it was 29 percent.
- Latino Milwaukee also suffers from a high percentage of children living in poverty.

Employment and Unemployment

- **Among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas in 2014, the non-employment rate** for Latino young adult males in Milwaukee (23 percent) ranked relatively low (the 18th lowest rate).
- For prime working years Latino males (ages 25-54), **Milwaukee's non-employment rate** of 14 percent ranked towards the middle-of-the-pack.
- The non-employment rates for Latino females in Milwaukee, for both young adults (29 percent) and prime age adults (32 **percent**) **ranked among the best among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas**
- In all metro areas, for both genders and for both the young adult and prime age cohorts, the growth in Latino employment has far outstripped the growth of non-Hispanic employment. In fact, in the 50 largest regions, Latino employment growth is driving the local labor market and Latino workers represent an ever-growing share of metropolitan workforces.
- In metro Milwaukee, because the total number of employed non-Hispanics has declined for both genders and age cohorts, Latino workers account for all of the net employment growth in the metropolitan area since 1990.
- In Milwaukee, the Hispanic labor force is highly concentrated in certain occupations. Compared to other metro areas, Latino males in Milwaukee are especially concentrated in production and materials moving occupations.
- For Latino males, Milwaukee ranks 29th in the degree of concentration in building and grounds cleaning and maintenance; 49th out of 50 in concentration in construction occupations; 1st out of 50 in concentration in production occupations; and 2nd out of 50 in concentration in materials moving occupations.
- For Latino females, the Milwaukee index of concentration, while over 100 in all occupations examined, ranks towards the middle-of-the-pack compared to other metros

in food preparation occupations and buildings and grounds occupations. However, Milwaukee Latinas are the 5th most concentrated in personal care service occupations **among the nation's largest metropolitan areas.**

Health Insurance

- Excluding children, many of whom are covered by various public plans, as well as those over 65 who are covered by Medicare, almost 30 percent of Milwaukee Latinos between the ages of 18 and 64 lack health insurance (compared to 7 percent for WNHs and 187 percent for blacks).
- The uninsured rate for all groups in Milwaukee has declined since 2009, but the decline in the percentage of uninsured has been the sharpest among Latinos, in all age categories. The uninsured rate for Latinos is lower in Milwaukee than in most of the **nation's largest metropolitan areas.**
- In 2009, Milwaukee had the 16th lowest rate of uninsured Latinos under age 65 among the 50 largest metro areas (28 percent); in 2014, Milwaukee posted the 12th lowest rate (20 percent).

Education and School Enrollment

- Milwaukee Latinos continue to lag, especially behind the WNH population, in educational attainment. While virtually all WNH adults (over age 25) in metro Milwaukee hold at least a high school degree (95 percent), fewer than two-thirds of Latinos in the region are similarly credentialed. The percentage of Latino high school graduates also lags well behind the figure for black Milwaukeeans (81 percent).
- The percentage of Milwaukee Latinos who are college graduates is very low – at 14 percent, it is barely one-third of the WNH rate. Latino-white disparities in educational attainment remain deeply entrenched in Milwaukee.
- However, notwithstanding these low rates and wide disparities, the educational attainment of Milwaukee Latinos has been increasing since 2000. The percentage of Milwaukee Latinos over age 25 with at least a high school degree increased from 52 percent in 2000 to 66 percent in 2014. This was the 10th highest rate of increase among **the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas during this period.**
- Between 2000-2014, **the percentage of Milwaukee Latinos with at least a bachelor's degree** also increased, from 10 percent to 14 percent. This was the 18th highest rate of **increase among the nation's 50 largest metropolitan areas during this period.**
- Between 1997 and 2014, total non-Hispanic enrollment in Milwaukee metro area schools declined by over 32,000, while Latino enrollment grew by almost 22,000. The trends are almost identical in public and private schools. The same pattern – rapid Latino growth, shrinking non-Hispanic enrollment— also occurred in each county (although the pattern was most pronounced in Milwaukee County).
- In all jurisdictions, (in the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County Suburbs, and the WOW Counties (Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington), between 1987-2016. there has been a huge percentage increase in Latino enrollments, although the numerical increases in the suburbs have been relatively modest, especially compared to the city. White non-Hispanic enrollments have dropped in all three jurisdictions over the past twenty years.

- Between 1987-2016, the Latino share of total City of Milwaukee enrollments grew from 8 percent to 25 percent; in the Milwaukee County suburbs, the Latino percentage grew from nearly 2 percent to nearly 14 percent of the total; and in the WOW counties, Latino enrollments grew from 1 percent to 7 percent of the total.
- Milwaukee Latino students, to a greater extent than Latino students in any other large metropolitan area in the U.S., attend private schools. By 2011-12, the most recent data available for all metro areas, 17 percent of all metro Milwaukee Latino students attended private schools. Given the expansion of voucher schools in the city over the past five years, this percentage has undoubtedly increased since then.